



Bay Area Toll Authority



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

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FACT SHEET

Carquinez Bridge West Span Replacement Project

Project Scope

The Carquinez Bridge connects Contra Costa and Solano counties along Interstate 80, crossing the Carquinez Strait between Crockett and Vallejo. The westbound span of the two, parallel structures that make up the bridge will be replaced with a new suspension-type bridge. As a separate, concurrent project, the eastbound span will be retrofitted for earthquake safety.

The replacement project will provide for three mixed-flow lanes plus one carpool or high-occupancy-vehicle lane and a new pedestrian/bicycle lane. The new structure will be built west of the existing two spans, and the existing westbound span's superstructure and towers will be demolished and removed. As part of the project, the Caltrans maintenance facility in Vallejo is being relocated to Benicia, and the Interstate 80 interchange in Crockett will be rebuilt. In addition, the Cummings Skyway has been extended from the Crockett interchange west to San Pablo Avenue in a joint Contra Costa County/Caltrans project.

Purpose and Benefits

The metal components of the west span have deteriorated and major rehabilitation would be virtually impossible while the bridge is in use. By replacing the span rather than retrofitting it, traffic disruptions can be kept to a minimum, and instead of a bridge that is almost at the end of its life span, the westbound I-80 crossing will essentially be reborn. Regional Measure 1 (see "Background" below) specifically included replacement of the existing west span of the Carquinez Bridge among the improvements to be funded from bridge tolls.

Project Profile

The span of the Carquinez Bridge now used for westbound traffic was built in 1927, and a second span was added in 1958, dedicated to eastbound traffic. The two spans currently carry an average of 109,000 vehicles daily. The westbound span and its Crockett off-ramp are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Caltrans has obtained approval for their demolition and replacement from the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Permit requirements of the Coast Guard, Army Corps of Engineers, State Department of Fish and Game, and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission also have been met. A Carquinez Bridge Community Advisory Committee was formed to facilitate communication and coordination with surrounding communities.

Background

In November 1988, voters in the nine Bay Area counties passed Regional Measure 1 (RM 1), increasing bridge tolls to \$1 to fund improvements to the region's bridges and their approaches. (More recently, a surcharge of \$1 for seismic retrofit was added to the tolls.) In January 1998, the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) assumed administration of the non-seismic portion of the tolls from the California Transportation Commission, and became responsible for funding and oversight of the RM 1 bridge projects. The state legislation that formed BATA designated the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) — the transportation planning, funding and coordinating agency for the nine Bay Area counties — as BATA. Caltrans owns and operates the state-owned toll bridges, and is responsible for their design, construction and maintenance.

Schedule and Cost

The final Environmental Impact Statement for the Carquinez Bridge replacement project was released in January of 1998 and the design of the new bridge was completed at the end of that year. Construction of the main span is scheduled to begin in March 2000, and that of the approaches and the Crockett interchange will commence in the fall of 2000. The new span is expected to open for traffic in early 2003. Total construction cost for the new bridge is \$340 million, financed entirely by bridge tolls.

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